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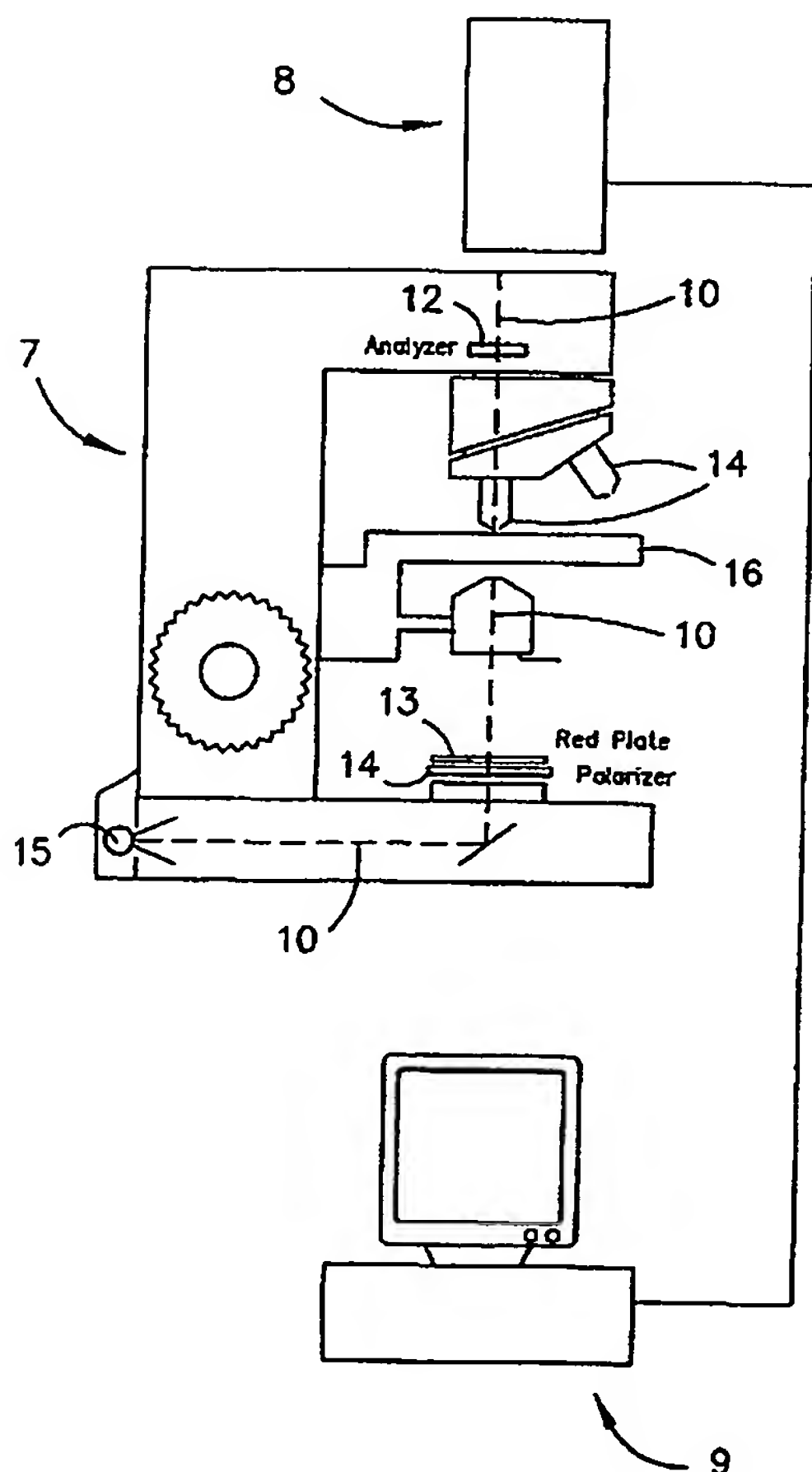
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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR TESTING FIBRES



(57) Abstract: A method for measuring the maturity or cell wall thicken-
ing of a sample of cellulosic fibre including the steps of: a) exposing the
sample of fibre to polarized light; b) capturing one or more images of the
sample through crossed polar lenses and a compensator plate so that the
image(s) include interference colours from the sample; and c) conducting
computer analysis on the image(s) captured in step b) to determine the
maturity or degree of cell wall thickening of the cellulosic fibre by com-
paring the image(s) to reference colour interference data. The apparatus
for carrying out the method includes an optical light path (10) for expos-
ing the sample of fibre to polarized light, an image capturing means (8),
and a computer (9) for conducting image analysis to determine fibre ma-
turity or the degree of cell wall thickening.



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